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CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICE

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November 17, 2014

To: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: Richard Sanchez
Chief Information Officer

PROTECTING SENSITIVE PERSONAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH INFORMATION – BOARD MEETING OF MAY 27, 2014, AGENDA ITEM NO. 12

This memorandum is in response to the May 27, 2014 Board Motion by Supervisor Ridley-Thomas and specific to the first directive, wherein your Board directed the Chief Information Officer (CIO), in coordination with the CIO Council and the Information Security Steering Committee (ISSC) to:

"Prepare a Technology Directive and implement a plan to encrypt County workstation hard drives to protect Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and Protected Health Information (PHI) data. The CIO shall provide a written progress update to the Board of Supervisors every 120 days until implementation is completed."

BACKGROUND

In the performance of duties to provide goods or services, departmental staff may store PII and PHI on computer workstations. Security of this information has been a priority with County departments; however, there is no requirement for data encryption within workstations unless physical security posed a risk of theft, burglary, or other malicious acts.

Escalation of cyber security and recent thefts of PII and PHI data requires that a more comprehensive protection of data within these devices be taken by County departments and its contractors.

TECHONOLGY DIRECTIVE AND IMPLEMENTATION

The County's Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) held several meetings with ISSC and departmental Information Technology (IT) administrators to discuss concerns to address workstation data encryption and strategy for security key management. Additionally, the group met with Gartner Consulting's author on data protection to obtain insight that would assist in the development of strategies for deployment.

The initial step was to discover the departments' encryption solutions in use. To gain this insight a survey was sent to all Departmental Chief Information Officers/IT Managers and Departmental Information Security Officers (DISOs). The survey identified four vendor products being used for encryption. Ideally, a single product solution to address encryption for all workstations, laptops, and port protection is desired. My Office will work with the departments to examine whether one, or two, products can meet all departments' requirements and possibly leverage a Countywide license agreement.

The Technology Directive for workstation encryption under review will require that all County workstations utilize the industry's highest-encryption available, regardless of whether PII or PHI is stored. This approach ensures data encryption throughout the enterprise mitigates the risk of a data breach.

A draft of the Technology Directive entitled "County Workstation Encryption" has been reviewed by the ISSC and was shared with the CIO Leadership Committee at the October 2014 Meeting.

Encryption implementation will be initiated immediately by identifying workstations not presently encrypted and proceeding to encrypt these devices. As necessary, we will work with those departments that do not have licenses for encryption software. To date, the Sheriff, District Attorney, and Public Social Services have initiated encryption of all of their departmental workstations.

NEXT STEPS

The Technology Directive is under review by the Departmental CIOs and CIO Leadership Committee with a plan for issuance in December.

On a monthly basis my Office will receive progress reports on workstation encryption prepared by the DISOs, and this information will be used to report progress to your Board.

My Office will work with the Auditor-Controller to develop a process to ensure that all ongoing departmental workstations are adhering to the encryption Technology Directive.

The next progress report will be provided no later than January 31, 2015. If you have any questions or need further information, please contact me or Robert Pittman, CISO, at 213-253-5631 or rpittman@cio.lacounty.gov.

RS:RP:pa

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel